

# Retail Store Of the Year

**C**hain Store Age honors the winners of its 28th annual store design competition, which attracted entries from around the globe. Barbie Shanghai, which celebrates one of America's most iconic brands, was awarded top honors, Retail Store of the Year.

In addition, there were 19 first-place awards and seven honorable-mention awards in the various categories.

The judges for this year's competition were Johan Ahlqvist, director of store planning and design, David's Bridal, Conshohocken, Pa.; Leo Clavel, director of store planning, new concepts and prototype development, Toys "R" Us/Babies "R" Us, Wayne, N.J.; Patrick Dooley, VP design and construction, Red Door Spas, Stamford, Conn.; John Duncan, adjunct instructor, interior design, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City; Navid Maqami, principal, GreenbergFarrow, New York City; Randall Stone, senior partner/director of customer experience and retail design, Lippincott, New York City; and Ali VanHorn, principal, Ali B Designs, Hunter, N.Y. (Judges whose companies submitted entries did not vote in their respective categories.)

All the winning projects are profiled in this special section. All placed first except where noted. For additional photos of the projects and a list of related resources and supplies, go to [chainstoreage.com](http://chainstoreage.com).

By Marianne Wilson

## Barbie's Winning Dreamhouse

### Best Overall Entry

#### Barbie Shanghai

Shanghai

Design: Slade Architecture, New York City

A multi-level, 36,000-sq.-ft. emporium devoted to a 50-year-old American icon was selected as Store of the Year in Chain Store Age's 28th annual retail design competition. In addition to being named best overall entry, Barbie Shanghai took top honors in three other categories: attraction retailing, fitting rooms and cashwrap. It also was awarded honorable mention in the exterior category.

Designed by Slade Architecture, New York City, the sparkling, pink-and-white Barbie Shanghai brings out the girl in women of all ages. A fun, unapologetically feminine interpretation of Barbie past, present and future, the store immerses shoppers in the brand and emphasizes its fashion roots. Along with the world's largest collection of Barbie dolls and themed merchandise, it offers a wide range of activities, from dining to salon treatments to makeovers. Girls can also design their own custom, one-of-a-kind Barbie in the Design Center. They can even become fashion models for the day and walk the runway in a special interactive experience.

The store makes its presence known with an attention-getting facade made of two layers: molded, translucent polycarbonate interior panels and flat, fritted glass exterior panels printed with a whimsical, lattice pattern of Barbie-trademark iconography. Color-changing LEDs light up the exterior at night.

Entering the store, customers are enveloped by the softly curved, pearlescent walls of the lobby. A high-impact fashion display and dramatic chandelier complete the scene. An escalator well, lit with bright-pink LEDs, takes customers up to the main floor, where they soon find themselves immersed in all things Barbie.



Photo: Iwan Baan, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The three-story staircase houses 800 Barbie dolls.



Visitors can read a book, watch a video or just relax in the media area, above. The kid-friendly toy area, right, is accented with a “cloud” chandelier.

The store is organized around a central spine — a winding staircase surrounded by 800 pink-outfitted Barbie dolls that are housed in staggered, wraparound translucent polycarbonate boxes. With the circular staircase and dolls at the core of the space, everything literally revolves around Barbie.

From mirrors shaped to resemble Barbie boots to display tables with poodle bases, the furniture and the fixtures throughout the store were designed to enhance the immersive environment. The designers used an innovative play of scale in select areas, giving visitors the effect of feeling

doll-sized. The effect is perhaps most memorable in the girls’ fitting rooms,

where the curtains operate like oversized hoop skirts, and are lowered with a motor.

Awash in pink hues and feminine accents, Barbie Shanghai is all girl from start to finish. It’s a high-style dreamhouse that honors the heritage of Barbie even as it looks to her future.



In the girls’ fitting rooms, left, curtains are styled like oversized hoop skirts. A variety of cashwraps, right, are found in the space.



## Softlines

(less than 5,000 sq. ft.)

## LittleMissMatched

Anaheim, Calif.

Design: JGA, Southfield, Mich.

With a signature product of socks that don't match, LittleMissMatched has a style and charm all its own. The fanciful design reflects the brand's emphasis on fun, fashion and creativity. Oversized wall graphics throughout the 1,017-sq.-ft. space encourage celebration of the brand through mismatching. The floor plan creates a pinball effect between merchandising elements, with hearts, stars and circles cut into the floor to emulate the patterns of the merchandise.

Photo: Laszlo Regos Photography, Berkley, Mich.

## Softlines

(less than 5,000 sq. ft.)

*Honorable Mention*

## Opry Originals

Nashville, Tenn.

Design: FRCH Design Worldwide, Cincinnati

Opry Originals brings together the iconic roots of the Grand Old Opry and country music's contemporary culture in an eclectic collection of old and new. The design brings the culture of country music to life through media, graphic imagery and reclaimed materials and finishes from the original home of the Opry: the historic Ryman Auditorium. Graphic textures lend to the rustic authenticity of the experience.



Photo: Javier Jarrin with OMS Photography, Cincinnati

## Softlines

(5,000 sq. ft. to 15,000 sq. ft.)

### Priscilla of Boston

Ardmore, Pa.

Design: David's Bridal/Priscilla of Boston,  
Conshohocken, Pa.

From start to finish, Priscilla of Boston is a reflection of timeless elegance. The 8,000-sq.-ft. bridal salon is designed with the same ideals of luxury and tradition found in the company's couture dress designs. The mix of upscale and classic custom furniture, crystal chandeliers and monumental mirrors allow for the sophisticated presentation of gowns, jewelry and accessories. The use of drapery and sheers in the windows and passageways provide an intimate ambience that allows the customer to enjoy highly personalized attention in a relaxed setting.



Photo: Johan Ahlqvist, David's Bridal/Priscilla of Boston

## Softlines

(5,000 sq. ft. to 15,000 sq. ft.)

*Honorable Mention*

### Guess

New York City

Design: Guess? Inc., Los Angeles

Guess makes a splash in SoHo with a stylish flagship that spotlights the brand's denim heritage. The 8,950-sq.-ft. store has an open floor that individualizes product collections through changes in lighting and materials. The existing cast iron columns, black tin ceilings and exposed brickwork were integrated and updated with blacks and golds, adding a modern edge to the building's 1890's era architecture. Black chandeliers wrapped in modern Mylar Shades bring into play the "old versus new" design aesthetic. Metallic and mirror finishes, including a metallic gold wash on the brick walls, add luminous details.



Photo: Jim Roof Creative, Duluth, Ga.

## Softlines

(15,000 sq. ft. to 50,000 sq. ft.)

## The Room

Toronto

Design: Yabu Pushelberg, Toronto

A series of artfully designed rooms that flow seamlessly into one another lend a gracious, residential feel to The Room, the 20,000-sq.-ft. high-end women's destination in the Bay's Toronto flagship. The redesign gives a sense of intimacy to the large space, whose rooms are distinguished by different finishes and colors. The VIP area, for example, is finished with a color palette of cool grays, mauve and soft silvery blue to create a sense of a great living room. Artistic elements such as decorative screens, hand-painted wall treatments and wooden chandeliers, enhance The Room's ethereal appeal, as does the use of natural materials and sculptural components throughout.



## Softlines

(15,000 sq. ft. to 50,000 sq. ft.)

*Honorable Mention*

## Tommy Hilfiger

New York

Design: Callison, Seattle

Contemporary architectural elements are blended with traditional furnishings and finishes to create a striking juxtaposition between modern and classic at the Tommy Hilfiger flagship on Fifth Avenue. The 22,000-sq.-ft. store has an American cool ambience that speaks directly to the brand itself.

The centerpiece of the interior is a dramatic, winding staircase that doubles as a viewing platform for a revolving art installation and ascends a total of four levels. The staircase resembles a floating sculpture and is accented with Brazilian cherry treads and a glass railing.



Photo: Callison, Seattle



## Softlines

(50,000 sq. ft. plus)

## Barneys New York

Scottsdale, Ariz.

Design: Gensler, New York

With its quiet sophistication and desert-inspired design accents, Barneys' Scottsdale emporium is perfectly in tune with the local market. The 60,000-sq.-ft. store is luxurious and inviting, with sculptural shapes throughout the interior, making reference to the surrounding landscape. Among the key elements is a monumental staircase weighing 35,000 lbs., whose treads and handrails are made of solid teak. In a whimsical nod to the store's western environs, a giant horse sculpture made out of wire hangers is positioned over the staircase.

## Restaurant

## Nisen Sushi

Commack, N.Y.

Design: Horst Design International at The Barn, Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.

Nisen Sushi offers patrons a seductive, inviting environment, one with an abstract, contemporary flair. The design, which creates a visually exciting atmosphere, combines unique elements with inexpensive materials, creating a visually exciting atmosphere while also keeping the project on budget. Among the unique elements are seating "pods" that provide a private and quiet dining option, theatrically lit string curtain dividers and bamboo wallcoverings.



Photo: Ric Marder Imagery, Commack, N.Y.

## Hardlines

(less than 5,000 sq. ft.)

## McEvoy Ranch

San Francisco

Design: Gensler, San Francisco

Respect for the environment and the products on display are prominent in the design of McEvoy Ranch, the signature retail concept of a 550-acre organic-farming ranch. The foundation of the design was inspired by the open kitchen and dining room of the ranch. Frosted acrylic panels above the wall units form a graphic border with the photo images of olive

treetops, a reference to the olive orchard seen through the farm's kitchen windows. Olive-green paint is integrated throughout, and moveable fixtures are made of olive wood. The design integrates mobility and flexibility — all fixtures and merchandise are stored and locked within closure gates at night.



## Hardlines

(less than 5,000 sq. ft.)

Honorable Mention

## Grand & Toy

Toronto

Design: Shikatani Lacroix Design, Toronto

Office solutions provider Grand & Toy targets small-business customers with a welcoming, new environment that showcases the company's broad range of services and distinguishes it from big-box competitors. The 4,275-sq.-ft. space was designed using high-end features, including custom millwork. Unique color treatments provide uncomplicated backdrops for the products on display.



Photo: Ed White Photographics, Vancouver, British Columbia



Photo: Mark Steele Photography, Columbus, Ohio

## Hardlines

(15,000 sq. ft. to 50,000 sq. ft.)

## West Marine

Jacksonville, Fla.

Design: Chute Gerdeman Retail, Columbus, Ohio

Entertainment-based, lifestyle-driven design and merchandising strategies help the spirit of boating come to life for customers at West Marine and widen the brand's appeal to recreational customers. Materials were chosen based on nautical authenticity; fabric sails, galvanized metal, teak countertops, boat ropes and carpet tiles with a wave-like pattern all reinforce the nautical feel. A full-size yacht helm and flying bridge serve as an eye-catching central focal point.

## Discount Store Walmart

Jacksonville, Fla.

Design: Lippincott, New York City

The new Walmart retail environment improves customers' in-store experience through a more consistent and less-cluttered brand expression. The contemporary design creates a new standard, with an emphasis on signage, graphics, colors and fixturing, while supporting the chain's strategic goals. The new signage and graphics system aids in wayfinding through all points on the shopping journey in the 195,000-sq.-ft. store. Department identification is achieved through a combination of large signage components and lifestyle imagery representative of the merchandise and Walmart customers.



Photo: Esto Photographics Inc., Mamaroneck, N.Y.

## Department Store **Liverpool**

Guadalajara, Mexico

Design: FRCH Design Worldwide, Cincinnati

Layers of movement expressed by everything from large-scale architectural elements to departmental merchandising help make the customer journey a memorable one at Liverpool. Lighting is used to create a more dramatic and theatrical effect throughout the 344,630-sq.-ft. department store and effectively showcases Liverpool's fashion-forward product offering. A "feature sculpture," suspended in the escalator well, is a focal point, with each color signifying a component of the Liverpool brand.



Photo: Javier Jarrin with OMS Photography, Cincinnati

## Department Store

*Honorable Mention*

## **Siman**

San José, Costa Rica

Design: Fitzpatrick International Group, Southampton, N.Y.

A modern design and simple, accessible floor plan made Siman the first major full-line department store in San José, Costa Rica, inviting and easy to shop. Among the unique design elements is a 70-ft.-high waterfall that envelops a glass and natural-stone elevator in the atrium. A subtle reminder that the rainforest is just a few hours away, the waterfall is enhanced with the sounds of wild birds and cascading water. As the water descends, the stream clings to hundreds of taut, thin nylon lines, which have been installed to keep the water from splashing outward.



Photo: BoundlessPhoto, Armando Del Vecchio, Costa Rica

## Supermarket Supermercado de Walmart

Houston

Design: Lippincott, New York City

Inspired by local bodegas and tailored to the warehouse experience, Supermercado de Walmart targets Hispanic customers in a setting that demonstrates food authority and value. The design leverages elements of the new Walmart Supercenter design, while maintaining a distinctive look and feel.

Colors, materials and finishes convey an authentic

Hispanic environment, based on the idea that shopping for, preparing and eating food is a celebration. Signage and graphics build fresh-food credentials and provide an intuitive wayfinding system.



Photo: Esto Photographics, Mamaroneck, N.Y.

## Supermarket Cosentino's Market

Kansas City, Mo.

Design: Associated Wholesale Grocers, Design and Decor Source Group, Kansas City, Kan.

Warm and inviting, Cosentino's Market combines old-world charm with a contemporary attitude. The design, which pays tribute to the owner's grandfather and his work as an ecclesiastical church muralist, creates destination areas within the 30,000-sq.-ft. supermarket. A palette of wood tones with red accents mixed with areas of intense color, Italian plaster on the walls and rich marble tops on case pieces and counters enhance the store's visual appeal.



Photo: Digital Niche, Independence, Mo.



## Exterior

# American Eagle Outfitters

New York City

Design: American Eagle Outfitters, store planning and design, Pittsburgh

American Eagle Outfitters adds to the excitement of Times Square with a destination flagship whose exterior is wrapped in 12 panels covered with 15,000 sq. ft. of LED screens. The spectacular, 25-story video displays feature content 18 hours a day and give the retailer any number of advertising options. They also allow shoppers to join in the action: After making a purchase, shoppers are invited to have their photo taken in the store's mini photo studio and, moments later, have the image projected onto the LED screens on the exterior.

## Shopping Center

# The Americana at Brand

Glendale, Calif.

Design: Elkus Manfredi Architects, Boston

Designed in the tradition of great public piazzas, The Americana at Brand combines opportunities for gathering, connection and community. The 900,000-sq.-ft. mixed-use center is marked by its architectural diversity, with a careful modulation of underlying rhythms reflected in the building heights, fenestration patterns, colors and materials. A "dancing" fountain propels water high into the air to the tune of synchronized music. The fountain is beautifully detailed and richly accented, down to its centerpiece: a cast-bronze, 21-ft.-tall sculpture (Spirit of American Youth) finished with a 23-karat gold leaf.



## Casual Dining Whopper Bar

Orlando, Fla.

Design: Interbrand Design Forum,  
Dayton, Ohio

Burger King energizes and extends its brand with a new concept, focused on its iconic Whopper burger. Materials are rooted in culinary cues, with an emphasis on the brand's signature flame grilling. The face of the front counter emulates grill lines, while corrugated metal walls are "scorched" with a red flame texture. Dramatic lighting and a color palette of dark red and black with metal finishes add to the hip, modern environment. So does the LCD-screen menu boards, whose dynamic content brings the product to life.



Photo: Interbrand Design Forum, Dayton, Ohio

## Casual Dining

*Honorable Mention*

## Chi-nnati's

Madeira, Ohio

Design: FRCH Design Worldwide, Cincinnati

Hip and stylish, Chi-nnati's serves up Chicago pizza, Cincinnati style. The overarching theme of duality and contrast is brought to life via abstract artwork of the Windy City and the Queen City, and even a dual typeface logo design. The 5,000-sq.-ft. space has an industrial flair, garnered from the use of reclaimed and repurposed materials. Images of ingredients are used in the graphics and signage throughout the space, tying everything back to the main product.



Photo: Javier Jarrin with OMS Photography, Cincinnati

## Service/ Sustainability

### PNC Harbor East

Baltimore

Design: Gensler, Baltimore

PNC Harbor East integrates the brand's focus on customer service with its commitment to the environment. The bank's location in an old furniture warehouse, and the design-infused salvaged materials from the building renovation with PNC's standard kit-of-parts, results in a welcoming and inviting banking environment. Material usage and selection, combined with the efficient mechanical and lighting systems, brought the project to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification.



Photo: Michael Moran, New York City



## International

### i To i

City of Dreams, Macau

Design: rkd retail/iQ, Bangkok

Featuring the most complete luxury sunglasses brand assortment in its market, i To i has a modern, upscale look that complements the goods on display. The planning and design encourages self-selection and trying on — all merchandise is presented in an open-sell environment. At the try-on bar, customers can gather multiple frame options and then edit and select while sitting comfortably.



## Attraction Retailing

*Honorable Mention*

### Uncle Buck's Fish Bowl

Altoona, Iowa

Design: Bass Pro Shops, Springfield, Mo.

Bowling and dining in a nautical-themed environment make for fun and entertainment at Uncle Buck's Fish Bowl. Twelve lanes offer customers the chance to bowl "under the ocean," with underwater scenery of sea turtles, sharks, stingrays and other saltwater species. In the Grill dining area, hand-painted murals depicting ocean life line the walls, and fish hang suspended from the ceiling. An island-themed bar area offers visitors the experience of feeling as if they are underwater, exploring the skeletal remains of a sunken ship. Looking up, visitors can see the battered, barnacle and coral-encrusted wooden hull; an old, rusted iron chain; and the iron rail around the bow. The bar features a 750-gallon saltwater aquarium with scores of beautiful, tropical fish.

## Pop-up Store Ridemakerz

Anaheim, Calif.

Design: Kick Design, New York City;  
Oei Design, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Although the project has an aggressive build-out timeline of only 10 days, the Ridemakerz temporary holiday store in Anaheim, Calif., is 100% on-brand, with an automotive garage-themed environment that appeals to its target customer of young boys. Authentic hood and rocker panels from the company-sponsored NASCAR racer hang as trophies in the 1,769-sq.-ft. space.



## Showroom Snaidero USA Showroom

New York City

Design: Giorgio Borruso Design,  
Marina Del Ray, Calif.

The sleek, high-end kitchen cabinets that are the trademark of Italian manufacturer Snaidero are showcased in the company's U.S. showroom in a manner that demands attention. Staggered strips wrap through the space like geological striations of previously defined layers. The focal point of the 2,200-sq.-ft. showroom lies at the origin of a series of long panels that jut out from the strips horizontally into the space, displaying a varied collection of material finish samples. Every line pushes and pulls, directing the visitors to the point of confluence.



Photo: Magda Biernat, New York City



Photo: Joy von Tiedermann, Toronto

## Showroom Sub-Zero Wolf Showroom

Toronto

Design: Cecconi Simone Inc., Toronto

Featuring the ultimate in luxury kitchen appliances, the Sub-Zero Wolf Showroom is designed around a "fire and ice" theme, with products presented in a modern gallery-like space that separates them into cooking and refrigeration. Framed by fire red and ice blue back-painted glass, the eye is drawn to the product. There are no visual distractions created by conventional millwork or cabinetry. Beyond the gallery, functional zones replicate how such products would be found in a home. An enclosed working kitchen allows guest chefs to showcase the product in action.